

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR HILDA L. SOLIS

August 4, 2015

Approximately 50 million Americans have hearing loss in at least one ear. One in five teenagers and 90 percent of Deaf newborns are born to hearing families. In California, there are over 3 million Deaf and hard of hearing persons while in Los Angeles County alone, there are almost 900,000 residents who are Deaf or hard of hearing. It is no surprise that American Sign Language (ASL) is the third-most used language in the United States.

Numerous contributions by Deaf individuals have been made throughout history. Helen Keller, is the most well-known Deaf-blind person to be educated, and the first one to graduate from college with honors. William Ellsworth Hoy is noted for being the most accomplished Deaf player in Major League history, playing from 1886-1902. His biggest contribution was the “hand” signals used by empires today to indicate balls, strikes, and safe. Beethoven, the composer for the Ninth Symphony was profoundly deaf when he composed some of his most recognizable pieces.

Organizations serving Deaf people can provide opportunities to pursue a hobby or commit to civic engagement on the local, regional, or national level. Los Angeles

MOTION

SOLIS \_\_\_\_\_

RIDLEY-THOMAS \_\_\_\_\_

KUEHL \_\_\_\_\_

KNABE \_\_\_\_\_

ANTONOVICH \_\_\_\_\_

County has numerous organizations dedicated to providing services to the Deaf community and who educate the County about the Deaf and hard of hearing community. Nationally, “Deaf Awareness” is celebrated during the third week of September, from the 20th through the 26th. The awareness campaign is sponsored by the World Federation of the Deaf and the National Association of the Deaf.

Deaf Awareness Month activities give participants an opportunity to become familiar with sign language and other communication means, learn about the resources that are available to the Deaf community, understand the differences in the perspective of Deafness held by hearing people versus that of Deaf people, differentiate between misconception and fact about Deaf people and Deaf culture and to recognize that lack of knowledge is the biggest barrier to communication and understanding.

**I, THEREFORE MOVE** that the Board hereby proclaims September 2015 as “Deaf Awareness Month” in the County of Los Angeles to increase awareness of Deaf issues, people, and culture. Activities and events throughout Deaf Awareness Month will encourage individuals to come together as a community through both educational events and celebrations.

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